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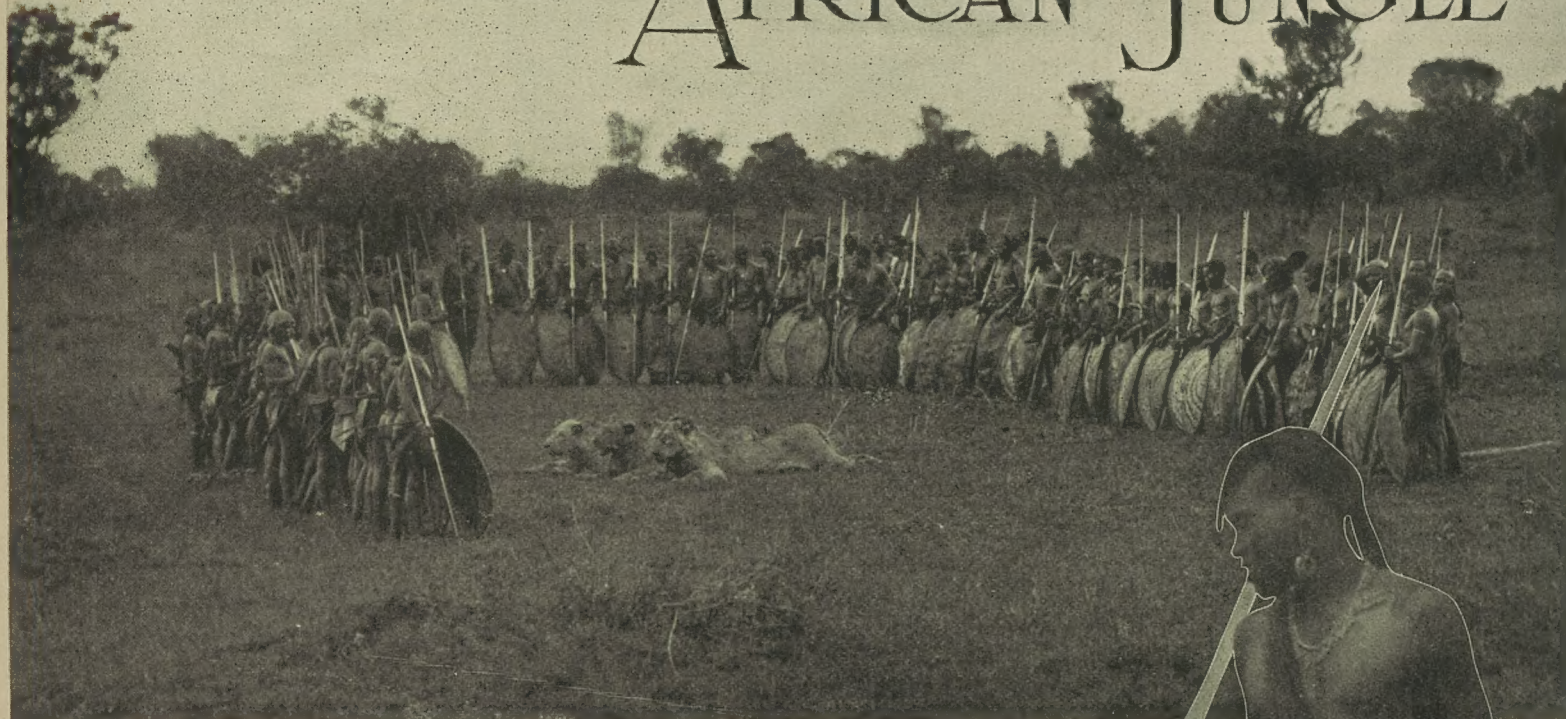


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LION SPEARING *in the* AFRICAN JUNGLE



After the killing

THE EXPEDITION OF CARL AKELEY IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA WITH
THE SAVAGE NANDI WARRIORS—AN UNIQUE METHOD OF LION-
HUNTING AND ITS ATTENDANT THRILLS

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Photographs by Carl E. Akeley

IN 1909, Carl E. Akeley, the sculptor-taxidermist of the American Museum of Natural History, was on one of his important expeditions in British East Africa, collecting specimens for the mammal groups in connection with his new African Hall.

Accompanied by Mrs. Akeley, who has to her credit the record tusker for the Kenya district, he had been hunting for some months in Uganda, and decided to go down to the fertile Uasin Gishu plateau, where he hoped to regain his health, as he had been suffering severe physical disability for some time.

This plateau is one of the most beautiful and healthful regions in the entire East African Protectorate, and is famous as a lion country. Here live the Nandi, a tribe closely allied to the warlike Masai. Until 1905 these people inhabited the whole of the highland, known as the Nandi Plateau. This country is roughly bounded by the Uasin Gishu plateau, extending to Mt. Elgon on the north, and by the Nyando valley on the south. For many years this savage tribe blocked the caravan route from Mombasa to Uganda, to Arab and Swahili alike, and many traders and some Europeans who escaped the Masai were lured into their country and massacred. They became so troublesome that the British authorities found it necessary to make two punitive expeditions against them. In 1905 they attacked the railroad and telegraph lines, and their depredations assumed such serious proportions that it was deemed best to conquer them for all time. This was done, and they have been placed



A Nandi huntsman

on reserves north of the escarpment that bears their name, and some distance from the line of the railroad.

Now that their warlike proclivities have been checked and they can no longer wage war with their weaker neighbors, the Nandi tribesmen have but one glory left—hunting down and killing lions with their spears. When the king of beasts turns man-eater, or becomes unduly troublesome by preying on their cattle, these doughty savages form a hunting party, and the lordly lion has no more chance for his life than did the Japanese soldier who volunteered to cut entanglements before Port Arthur. So jealous are they of their remaining glory that they will not hunt with a white man if he use a rifle, as they insist upon the sport of despatching Leo in their own blood-curdling manner. Colonel Roosevelt, who witnessed a lion speared by the Nandi, was unable to secure their services as beaters for his party, for they flatly refused to hunt unless they alone were to deal with the lions.

No more stirring or awe-inspiring experience is to be encountered on the Dark Continent than when one of these mighty beasts is caught in the tightening ring of fearless blacks, to be literally riddled by their terrible spears. This sounds cruel indeed, but apart from the fact that lions are dangerous vermin and must be kept in check, it is the most humane manner in which these terrors of the African night come to their end.

Seldom it is that a lion is quickly disposed of by firearms, while it is never more than a few seconds from the time the first spear is driven home until his reign of terror is over.

Before leaving Uganda, Akeley had sent orders ahead to Kelly, a

professional hunter, to secure the services of a hundred of the Nandi, and to organize a *safari* of about one hundred porters. This was done and upon his arrival the expedition was ready to move. Regular rations had been supplied for the porters, but the Nandi insisted upon special rations, demanding an ox a day before they would agree to accompany

the *safari*. As the hunt was planned for twenty days, it was necessary to secure twenty oxen for their sole consumption. These were supplied, and the *safari* started on its way across the plateau, with the long line of naked Nandi in the lead, each warrior armed with his long throwing spear and oddly decorated shield of oxhide. The blades of their spears are of soft iron, about four feet in length, the edges ground to razor sharpness.

Mr. Akeley's object in making this special expedition was to secure, if possible, a satisfactory motion picture record of the sensational sport, and with this view in mind, before starting for Africa he had called on the leading camera maker in London and had had made for him the finest motion picture outfit that it was possible to secure at that time. He realized that, aside from the value of a permanent record of these people to ethnology, he could dispose

of such a film at a price that would substantially aid him in his African work.

The only white people on the hunt were Mr. and Mrs. Akeley and Kelly. They had not proceeded far on their way when the signal was given that the Nandi had surrounded a lion in a clump of thick bush far in advance of the main party. They rode hurriedly to the spot, and the camera was brought up and made ready for action. Wild shouts



It was necessary to take with the hunting party a herd of twenty of these native oxen, for the Nandi demanded an ox a day instead of the ordinary rations of the party



HUNTSMEN SHARPENING THEIR SPEARS

These savages use only spear and shield in dispatching their game and will not hunt with a white man if he use a rifle to kill. The blades of their spears are of soft iron, about four feet in length, and the edges are ground to a razor-like sharpness. The aim of the men is so sure that the first thrust is usually fatal

and mad commotion were to be heard in the bush, but neither lion nor spearmen could be seen. In a few minutes a Nandi was led out by two of his companions with his entire scalp torn loose and his body ripped up in a terrible manner. Shortly after, a crowd of the Nandi appeared in the open with the carcass of a huge leopard, its body pierced with sixty spear wounds.

Akeley patched up the unfortunate black as best he could, and he was sent back to his people to recover, a much disgruntled and disappointed man, for he wanted to go on with the party and see the excitement. This was not Akeley's first experience with a leopard, for he

ten days they were found aplenty, and from then on excitement at least was seldom lacking. A troupe of five lions was first encountered, and Akeley was given some lively moments in his efforts to use the camera. When a lion is brought to bay, the Nandi at once form a circle about the animal, each warrior crouching on one knee with his shield held before him to ward off the charge, his spear gracefully poised for instant action. Slowly, foot by foot, the circle is tightened until the ring of bristling blades is close about the now thoroughly aroused and desperate beast, who stands with lashing tail and drooping jaw, vainly searching for an opening to escape, all the while giving forth his roars of fear



THE FALLEN MONARCH

When a lion is brought to bay, the Nandi form a circle and gradually close in about the desperate beast with their ring of bristling spears until the animal finally charges at the nearest man and impales himself upon the shaft. This is the signal for a volley of lances, and the lion's death is generally a matter of seconds, his body riddled with the sharp blades

himself had been badly mauled by one, miraculously escaping with his life after strangling the creature with his bare hands, but not before a long and terrible struggle that hung in the balance for some minutes. The story of this episode is one of the most remarkable recorded in the annals of African adventure.

For several days following the spearing of the leopard, the party met with little but vexatious times. No lions were found and many disputes arose among these children of the plains, and when trouble would start to brew among them it required great tact and patience to get their petty grievances straightened out.

Each day at sundown one of the oxen was killed, and furnished a weird scene for the white members of the *safari*, for the Nandi leave nothing but the skin and bones, holding the blood and the intestines as the greatest of delicacies. The meat is eaten practically raw, as they little more than warm it over their fires. Subsisting entirely on a diet of milk, blood and flesh, the Nandi are men of great physical strength and condition, and their long, heavy spears are like mere wands in their hands.

Not until the end of ten days were lions found, but for the following

and defiance. Soon the spearmen are all but upon him and the lion charges madly at the nearest man, who sends the long, cruel blade hurtling into the beast, receiving the shock of the charge on his shield, while a veritable shower of spears rain on the brute, tearing their way through his vitals.

Seldom does the first spear miss its mark, and usually the lion wheels about, savagely biting the wound, only to be laid low in a few seconds with perhaps forty of the weapons in his body.

Then there is great rejoicing among the Nandi, who dance about the dead lion in a frenzy.

Out of this band of five lions three were speared, and Mr. Akeley secured a picture, but one of little value to him, as the lion cannot be seen except in quick glimpses, and never in full view. It was very discouraging, as he was continually handicapped by the time required to get the camera in proper position and ready to operate, and as the killing is over in such brief space of time there is no latitude for such delays. At this time no camera was on the market that could be assembled and put into play in less than five minutes, even by the most expert operator.



APPLYING FIRST AID IN AN AFRICAN JUNGLE

The facial expressions of this unconscious group make the photograph perhaps the most interesting of all that were taken on the expedition. The patient, who received his wounds from a lion in its death agony, is rather fearful of the antiseptic syringe, and his companions appear to share in his doubts, but are willing to have it tried on him.

Two days after these lions were killed, another band of five was rounded up by the Nandi, and three of these were added to their bag, but not before they had done considerable damage with fang and claw on their black adversaries. These lions furnished plenty of tense moments and thrills, but no picture. One of the Nandi was out in the open, separated from his companions, when a lion broke through the cordon of spearmen and charged him. He let drive his spear with deadly aim and killed his lion single-handed, but the huge beast, though mortally wounded with the blade entirely through his body, gave good account of himself in his few dying moments, leaving his slayer badly mauled. In the illustration—a most remarkable study of these people—the reader can see Kelly filling a syringe with antiseptic to treat his wounds. The boy appears to have far greater fear of “first aid” than of any tawny man-eater that ever roamed the jungle.

It frequently happens that the lion charges home before he is killed, and quite often it ends fatally for one or more of these brave hunters.

A few days later still another band of five lions was put up, and of these only one was killed, the other four making good their escape in the excitement; but the following day, when yet another troupe of five were encountered, three more were speared, making a total of ten lions killed out of twenty in the twenty days the expedition was out.

It was one of these last lions that was destined to doom Akeley to the greatest disappointment of his career in Africa, and one that would have been calculated to cause most men to abandon entirely any future effort to record the spearing of lions for the movies.

As has been said, Akeley had met with every possible vexation in his

efforts to secure a satisfactory film, either because the lions were killed in the bush or on account of poor light conditions, but more often because of delays in attempting to get the camera in position. Many times during the first two weeks of the hunt, he was on the point of giving up the effort, but at last the wished-for opportunity came, and under conditions more ideal than he ever hoped for.

The signal had been given that a lion was surrounded in a small clump of cover, and Akeley rode to the spot and was getting his camera ready when a great shout was heard, and it was found that another lion had been brought to bay some hundred or more yards away, this time right out in the open and the best light that could be desired.

Now or never he was to achieve success. He rushed to the spot, much winded and found that the beast was a magnificent male, and the crowd of yelling, frenzied savages were doing their best to delay his charge until the camera was ready. Akeley worked like mad, but before the instrument was ready the lion charged the long blades flashing in the sunlight and all was over, the great creature impaled on a dozen spears.

The Nandi were chanting their weird songs of triumph, but there was no joy in Akeley's heart. Mrs. Akeley, who had stood at his shoulder during the entire scene, could not hold back her tears, but a man cast in the mold of Akeley is not given to expressing his emotions in so mild a manner, and it is doubtful if the Nandi understood his strange speech.

Turning to his brave wife, he comforted her with these words: “Never mind, we will come back here some day, and when we do I shall have built a camera that will do this thing.”

Mr. Akeley has made his word good, and though he has never at-



tended any school of engineering for so much as a day, he has just completed the greatest motion picture camera ever invented, and one that can be taken afield and trained on big game with practically the same facility as a rifle.

As soon as conditions in Europe permit, Mr. Akeley will return to Africa and continue his work, and with him will go his own camera, and the world may well expect startling results.

The field for this instrument is not limited, however, to big game hunting; there are many other instances in motion picture photography where, up to the present

time, the camera man has not been successful, owing to the length of time and the careful placing necessary before the cameras now in use are ready for action. Mr. Akeley's instrument marks an incalculable step forward in all motion picture photography.

Mechanically, the Akeley camera is no less wonderful than the happenings, such as the foregoing, that it is designed to record. It is a marvel of compactness, convenience and adaptability, and the ease and quickness with which the adjustments can be made render it especially suitable for photographing a lion hunt, an aeroplane flight, or any other event where speed and facility in training the camera are necessary. For ordinary work the camera, which is shaped like a small cheese-box, is used with a tripod, but, unlike the usual models, Mr. Akeley's camera



A member of the expedition who was nearly mauled to death by a leopard. He was greatly disappointed at being sent home to recuperate



Ready for the attack. Each man crouches gracefully on one knee, with his shield before him to ward off the attack and his spear poised for instant action

may be set on any kind of a rest and brought immediately to an absolutely dead level. The device by which the camera is swung in an arc is self-contained, so that no tripod is necessary when a progressive scene is being photographed. This "panoram" feature is not confined to the horizontal, either; it is quite as easy to move the camera to take a balloon ascension as a moving express train. And the mechanism is so perfect that these various movements are achieved with perfect regularity of speed.

Another remarkable device is that which allows the operator to focus on the object while it is being

photographed, and there is also a device for focusing on a ground glass as well. This latter is accomplished by pressing a small lever on the top of the camera, cutting a flap through the film and automatically throwing a ground glass into the same position as that occupied by the film.

To mention all the wonders of this epoch-making camera would require a small-sized book. Its operation being noiseless, it is of especial value to the naturalist. It will do just the things that the movie camera which Mr. Akeley took with him on the lion-spearing expedition would not do, and it will do hundreds of other things besides. The possibility of pointing the lens directly downward will make it perfectly feasible to photograph even a surgical operation without additional apparatus.



RESTING AFTER THE HUNT

A hundred of these savages accompanied Mr. Akeley on his expedition. Since their warlike proclivities have been checked by the British, the Nandi tribesmen have but one glory left—hunting down and killing lions with their spears. The men are of great strength and splendid physical condition, and handle the long heavy spears as if they were mere wands